

Message Text

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61

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 CU-04 DRC-01

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R 191205Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4347

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 10059

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, MY

SUBJECT: CONTINUED THAI REACTION TO MALAYSIAN MINISTER'S REMARKS

REFS: A. BANGKOK 9963; B. FBIS D190805Z JUN 74; C. FBIS D180825Z

JUN 74; D. FBIS D190210Z JUN 74; E. KUALA LUMPUR 2835

1. REFERENCE B CONTAINS AN ARTICLE FROM THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY "THE NATION" OF JUNE 19 WHICH QUOTES THE TEXT OF THE "STRAITS TIMES" ARTICLE CARRYING PAN MALAYSIAN ISLAMIC PARTY LEADER, DATUK HAJI MUHAMMED ASRI'S REMARKS. REFERENCE C CONTAINS THE BANGKOK DOMESTIC SERVICE REPORT STATING THAT THAI FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUM NA AYUTTHAYA WAS DISSATISFIED WITH THE EXPLANATION HE RECEIVED FROM THE MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR TO BANGKOK. REFERENCE D CONTAINS A REPORT IN THE "BANGKOK POST" THAT THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND (NSCT) IS PLANNING TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER SANYA DEMANDING THE WITHDRAWAL FROM THAI TERRITORY OF A COMPANY

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OF MALAYSIAN TROOPS STATIONED AT BETONG, IN YALA PROVINCE,

FOR JOINT BORDER PATROL PURPOSES. THE NSCT ACCUSED THE MALAYSIAN TROOPS OF ASSISTING THE SEPARATIST MOVEMENT INSTEAD OF SUPPRESSING THE (ETHNIC CHINESE) BORDER GUERILLAS. ALL THAI, AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE CHINESE/PAPERS CARRY STORIES SIMILAR TO THE BANGKOK DOMESTIC SERVICE RADIO REPORT (REFERENCE C).

2. COMMENT: BOTH THE THAI GOVERNMENT AND THE THAI PUBLIC ARE CONTINUING TO TAKE QUITE SERIOUSLY THE INCIDENT THAT MR. ASRI'S REMARKS HAVE OCCASIONED. WE FIND THIS PARTICULARLY TROUBLESOME IN VIEW OF THE RECORD OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, HIGHLIGHTED BY THE RECENT JOINT BORDER COMMITTEE MEETING IN KUALA LUMPUR. THIS INCIDENT COMES AT AN ESPECIALLY UNFORTUNATE TIME IN VIEW OF THE IMMINENT CONVOCATION OF THE ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN KUALA LUMPUR. WE CAN ANTICIPATE THAT, DESPITE MALAYSIA'S REPORTED INTEREST IN NOT STIRRING UP CONTROVERSY OVER THE MUSLIM MINORITIES IN SOUTH THAILAND AND THE PHILIPPINES (REFERENCE E), THAI SUSPICIONS AND NEGATIVE PUBLIC SENTIMENT WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO RUN HIGH FOR THE DURATION OF THE CONFERENCE, AND PROBABLY BEYOND.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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